

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of Claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of Claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-14 (Previously canceled)

15. (Currently amended) Apparatus for releasing a magnetic security device, the apparatus comprising:

a) _____ a first portion for locating an article in a first direction; and

b) _____ a second portion for locating an article in a second direction substantially perpendicular to the first direction; and

c) _____ wherein the first and second portions ~~forming a slot for receiving the~~ define a receptacle configured and adapted to receive an article but so as to physically restraining-restrain the article in the first and second directions as it is brought into contact with the first and second portions, while leaving the article unrestrained in at least a third direction substantially perpendicular to the first and second directions, the receptacle being configured and adapted to receive an article having first and second surfaces that are wider in the third direction than the apparatus; and

d) _____ at least one of the first and second portions including magnetic release means arranged to assist in locating an initially misaligned article into alignment in the third direction by magnetic attraction of the security device as the article is brought into contact with the at least one of the first and second portions, the magnetic release means being arranged to provide a first

magnetic force in the first direction and a second magnetic force in the second direction for releasing a magnetic security device from the article.

16. (Currently amended) Apparatus for releasing a magnetic security device, the apparatus comprising:

a) a first portion for locating an article in a first direction; and

b) a second portion for locating an article in a second direction substantially perpendicular to the first direction;

c) wherein the first and second portions define so as to provide an L-shaped slot or receptacle for restraining the configured and adapted to restrain an article in the first and second directions as it is brought into contact with the first and second portions, while leaving the article unrestrained in at least a third direction substantially perpendicular to the first and second directions, the L-shaped slot ~~receptacle~~ being capable of receiving articles of a wide range of shapes and sizes having a security device installed adjacent two substantially perpendicular sides thereof, the receptacle being configured and adapted to receive an article having first and second surfaces that are wider in the third direction than the apparatus; and

d) at least one of the first and second portions including magnetic release means arranged to provide a first magnetic force in the first direction and a second magnetic force in the second direction for releasing a magnetic security device from the article.

17. (Previously presented) Apparatus as claimed in claim 15 in which the first portion defines a first plane and the second portion defines a second plane substantially perpendicular to the first plane.

18. (Currently Amended) Apparatus as claimed in claim 17 in which the first and second planes define a ~~slot~~receptacle having a substantially L-shaped cross-section.

19. (Previously presented) Apparatus as claimed in claim 15 in which the first and second portions respectively comprise a base portion and a top portion upstanding therefrom.

20. (Previously presented) Apparatus as claimed in claim 19 in which the first and second portions are connected together by means of at least one mutually engageable projection and recess.

21. (Previously Presented) Apparatus as claimed in claim 15 in which a first magnet mounted in the first portion provides the magnetic force in the first direction and a second magnet mounted in the second portion provides the magnetic force in the second direction.

22. (Previously presented) Apparatus as claimed in claim 21 in which at least one of the first and second magnet comprises a plurality of parts which are held together in a configuration in which they tend to repel each other.

23. (Currently Amended) Apparatus as claimed in claim 22 in which at least one of the first and second magnets comprise a central part with a plurality of further parts adjacent thereto, the magnetic axes of each of the further parts being perpendicular to that of the central part.
24. (Previously presented) Apparatus as claimed in claim 15 having closure means moveable between an open position which provides access to the magnetic release means and a closed position which prevents an article being presented to the magnetic release means.
25. (Previously presented) Apparatus as claimed in claim 24 in which the closure means comprises a slideable or pivotable cover.
26. (Previously presented) Apparatus as claimed in claim 24 having locking means for locking the closure means in the closed position.
27. (Previously presented) Apparatus as claimed in claim 16 in which at least one of the first and second portions are arranged to assist in locating the article in a third direction substantially perpendicular to the first and second directions by magnetic attraction of the security device as the article is brought into contact with the first and second portions so as to align the magnetic security device with the magnetic release means.

28. (Previously Presented) A method of releasing a magnetic security device comprising the steps of providing an apparatus as claimed in claim 15 and presenting an article with a magnetic security device thereto to release the magnetic security device therefrom.

29. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for releasing a magnetic security device, the apparatus comprising:

a) a first portion for locating an article in a first direction and a second portion for locating an article in a second direction substantially perpendicular to the first direction, the first and second portions forming a ~~slet~~receptacle for receiving the article but physically restraining the article in the first and second directions as it is brought into contact with the first and second portions;

b) at least one of the first and second portions including magnetic release means arranged to assist in locating the article in a third direction substantially perpendicular to the first and second directions by magnetic attraction of the security device as the article is brought into contact with the at least one of the first and second portions so as to align the magnetic security device with the magnetic release means, the magnetic release means being arranged to provide a first magnetic force in the first direction and a second magnetic force in the second direction for releasing a magnetic security device from the article; and

c) closure means moveable between an open position which provides access to the magnetic release means and a closed position which prevents an article being presented to the magnetic release means.

30. (Previously Presented) An apparatus as claimed in claim 29 in which the closure means comprises a slideable or pivotable cover.

31. (Previously Presented) An apparatus as claimed in claim 29 having locking means for locking the closure means in the closed position.

32. (New) An apparatus for releasing a magnetic security device, the apparatus comprising: a first portion for locating an article in a first direction and a second portion for locating an article in a second direction substantially perpendicular to the first direction, the first and second portions forming a receptacle for receiving the article but physically restraining the article in the first and second directions as it is brought into contact with the first and second portions, while leaving the article unrestrained in at least a third direction substantially perpendicular to the first and second directions; at least one of the first and second portions including magnetic release means arranged to assist in locating an initially misaligned article into alignment in the third direction by magnetic attraction of the security device as the article is brought into contact with the at least one of the first and second portions, the magnetic release means being arranged to provide a first magnetic force in the first direction and a second magnetic force in the second direction for releasing a magnetic security device from the article; wherein the magnetic release means include a first magnet assembly having a first central magnet and a first plurality of peripheral magnets mounted adjacent to the first central magnet such that the magnetic axis of each peripheral magnet of the first plurality is substantially perpendicular to the magnetic axis of the first central magnet, and a second magnet assembly having a second central magnet and a second plurality of peripheral magnets mounted adjacent to the second central magnet such that the magnetic axis of each peripheral magnet of the second plurality is substantially perpendicular to the magnetic axis of the second central magnet.